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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO. Date: Aug 78**INFORMATION REPORT**

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COUNTRY

Germany (Russian Zone)

DATE DISTR. 24 March 1948

SUBJECT

SED Affairs; The Volkskongress Movement;
Russian-Licensed Press

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1. the Volkskongress movement is to serve as a springboard from which Communism will attain in Germany the goal already reached in Czechoslovakia and the other eastern "People's Democracies". The Volkskongress has a "working body" of between three hundred and four hundred members of all parties which could form the basis of a German government. Such a government, which, of course, would appeal to the desire of the German people for unity, would not only find millions of supporters, but eventually might be recognized by foreign powers as a provisional German government. Thus, the true purpose of the Volkskongress is not simply to furnish a new disguise for the SED and to draw the CDU and the LDP of the Eastern Zone into a unity party, as is thought by some western observers. A petition for a plebiscite on German unity is to be circulated throughout Germany. Large numbers are expected to sign the petition in the Russian Zone alone.

25X1A Comment: According to the census of 1946, the total population of the Soviet Zone was 17,332,907.)

2. Otto Grotewohl stated that friendship pacts and economic agreements with the eastern European states are essential to Germany and that the successful reconstruction of the Eastern Zone depends upon the conclusion of such alliances in the near future. The eastern European nations should take a greater interest in German affairs and see to it that they wield as much influence here as do the western powers.

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[redacted] Comment: The editors of Neues Deutschland objected when they were asked to carry the original Tass dispatch which caused the ban by its criticism of General Koenig. They carried their protest to the Russians and to SED headquarters, but were told that they must print it. Everyone responsible was fully aware that it would bring a ban.)

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4. [redacted] confirms that Heinrich Rau, Minister of Economic Planning in Brandenburg, will be appointed Chairman of the Russian Zone Economic Commission. Fritz Selbmann will become director of all state-owned industries. In the general reshuffling of personnel all CDU, LDF, and former SPD members are to be excluded from important positions.

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